

the passage of this bill than I had ever before made. I have thought about it a great deal, and I still don't know what more I could have done.

Those who have been most critical of the failure of this important piece of legislation lose sight of the fact that quite frequently matters of great consequence such as this require more than one session of the General Assembly for passage. Take, as good example, the legislation creating our present system of public higher education. You recall the report of the Warfield Commission in 1959 and the effort that was made to carry out its suggestions through legislation. But the Legislature would not approve this report, and so I named still another commission—the Curlett Commission—to re-examine the situation. Finally, in 1963 the General Assembly received the report and recommendations of that Commission and created what is generally considered to be an excellent system of public higher education. It was a drastic measure, and the lawmakers in Annapolis chose to proceed with great caution and great deliberation. The Cooper-Hughes proposal was, if anything, an even more drastic program, and there were many who were surprised that it came so near passage—within two votes in the House of Delegates.

Many more examples could be cited of legislative wariness in the face of proposals of great consequence. The General Assembly last year turned down my proposal for the creation of an educational television program in the State, but when I made a similar request this year they approved it. My proposal last year that we begin the immediate construction of a second crossing of the Chesapeake Bay was rejected out of hand by the Legislature at the 1965 session, but a second Bay crossing was approved at the session which adjourned a few weeks ago. I signed the parallel bridge bill into law last week, and at the time I issued a statement in which I attempted to clarify this Administration's position on the subject. I said—and I repeat now—that I know of no proposed law that has generated so much dissension, so much misinformation, so much conscious distortion of the truth as has this bill. Most people do not know—despite the fact that it has been said and printed innumerable times—that there was no legal necessity for this bill. Two years ago I was advised by both local and New York counsel that this Administration had full legal authority to begin the parallel bridge without additional legislation. It was I who decided to place the matter before the General Assembly, notwithstanding the fact that I was sure I did not need the legislative approval. But I felt that in an undertaking of such far-reaching importance, the people